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TUDOR PRONUNCIATION OF OE. *ū* AND OE. *ā*.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—In *M. L. N.*, xxii, 28, Mr. J. M. Hart gives an apposite explanation of an apparent crux in Wyatt. In *Tottel's Miscellany*, p. 39, the line "And euery houre, a thought in readinesse," is a translation of Petrarca's "A ciascun remo un pensier pronto e rio." H. states that the ms. has *owre* instead of *houre*, and he identifies *owre* with Modern English *oar* = Italian *remo*! There can be no doubt that Hart's suggestion solves the difficulty: *owre*, *ower* occur elsewhere in the sixteenth century, cf. the *Oxford Dictionary*. But his phonological explanation of this peculiar spelling cannot be right. H. thinks that ME. *ȝre* = 'oar' and *ūre* = 'hour' 'must have sounded so much alike in Wyatt's day that one might easily be written for the other.' ME. *ū* seems to have been *ou* in the sixteenth century (cf. my *Historische Neuenglische Grammatik*, I, Strassburg, 1908, § 106), and ME. *ȝ* had not yet changed. In sixteenth century orthography we find not only *owre* for *oar*, *bowth* for *both*, but also *kno* for *know*, *boe* for *bow* (OE. *boga*). These spellings seem to prove that the ME. diphthong *o + u* (*ou*, *ow*) had already begun to be monophthongized, cf. *Hist. Ne. Gr.*, § 137. *owre* = *ȝre* is a so-called 'reversed spelling.'

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CELTIC LORE.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—The two following bits of Celtic legend are of interest, the first as a faint reflex of the Narcissus story, the second as a modified anticipation of a Shakespearian incident. In the *Rennes Dindsenchas*,¹ a series of Irish topographical legends, the name Eas Ruaid (now Assaroe, on the river Shannon) is thus explained: "Eas Ruaid, whence its name: It was Aed Ruad, son of Badurn, King of Ireland, that was drowned there while gazing at his image and swimming the rapid. From him Ess Ruaid."

If, in place of Prince Hal's vaunt to his father that Percy "shall render every glory up," Percy had made a verbal surrender of all his honors on the battle-field, we should then have a repetition of a scene from the career of Mesgegra, a king of Leinster. This ill-fated warrior, fleeing in rout before the victorious Ulstermen, was at-

tacked by Conall Cernach, an Ulster champion. After a fierce, one-armed fight, Mesgegra, realizing he was being worsted, submitted to the inevitable, saying: "I wot thou wilt not go till thou takest my head with thee. Take thou my head on thy head, and my glory on thy glory,"²—injunctions which Conall fulfills literally.

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BRIEF MENTION.

The editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes* are glad to petition for the heartiest support of the Malone Society, by reproducing the following "Notice of closing the roll of members," recently sent out by the *Hon. Secretary* of the Society:

The Malone Society was founded in 1906 with the object of printing, for the use of members, texts of early English plays and documents and notes illustrative of the history of the English stage and drama. As the outcome of the first two years of its activity the Society has issued twelve volumes, ten plays and two parts of Collections, and a further set of six volumes is in course of preparation for the current year.

By a resolution passed at the Annual General Meeting in March last the Council was empowered to close the Roll of the Society whenever it should deem it expedient during the current year, not from any desire to make it a close corporation in the interest of existing Members, but in order that, with a definite income and a definite number of helpers, it may proceed with the work it has undertaken, with the knowledge of how much it is possible to do in each year. The Society has now 215 members.

Notice is accordingly now given that the Roll of the Society will be closed on 20 March, 1910, after which candidates will only be admitted as vacancies occur, and on payment of an Entrance Fee. Any one interested in the objects of the Society, and who wishes to join it before the Roll is closed, is invited to communicate with the *Hon. Secretary* (Arundell Esdaile, British Museum, W. C.), who will also be pleased to furnish any further information. Public Libraries and Institutions are admitted to Membership, and may be represented by their Chief Officer. The Annual Subscription is One Guinea. Candidates' names are submitted to the Council for election.

¹ Edit. and trans. by Wh. Stokes in the *Revue Celtique*, vol. xv, from a codex of the 14th or 15th century.

² *The Siege of Howth*, edit. and trans. by Wh. Stokes in the *Revue Celtique*, vol. viii, from the *Book of Leinster* (12th century).